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ABSTRACT

The close relationship that Peace Corps volunteers develop with their communities and schools places them in a unique position to influence the behaviors and attitudes of the young women with whom they work. Workshops, camps, clubs, special events, and conversations all have the potential to promote decision-making skills, encourage goal setting, and build confidence. Volunteers have the potential to help girls change their lives for the better. This booklet provides a collection of ideas and activities from Peace Corps volunteers around the world to be used as a resource in the work of empowering young women. Following an introduction, the booklet is divided into nine sections: (1) "Things To Consider as You Read"; (2) "Helpful Tips for Organizing an Event"; (3) "Mentoring for Empowerment and Leadership"; (4) "Clubs"; (5) "Camps and Conferences"; (6) "Sports"; (7) "Contests"; (8) "Life Skills Education"; and (9) "Resources." (BT)

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PEACE CORPS

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM:

EMPOWERING GIRLS

IDEA BOOK
M0080

SO 033 822

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BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: EMPOWERING GIRLS

Peace Corps

February 2000

Information Collection and Exchange
Publication No. M0080

The Idea Book Series

This Idea Book is first of a series of booklets to be produced to share specific activities you may be interested in replicating. Other potential titles in the series are listed below. All of these ideas come from the work of Volunteers. Most of the submissions contain only the description printed—there is no additional information. Others were parts of larger reports. Where there are additional reference materials for an idea, notations tell you how to obtain them. There is also a reference section at the end of the booklet. Please contact the appropriate person/group to follow up on the ideas.

You are encouraged to submit your successful activities to this series. You will find a form on the final page of this booklet with instructions.

Potential Titles in the Idea Book Series:

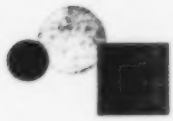
Beyond the Classroom: Empowering Girls

In the Classroom: Empowering Girls

HIV/AIDS

Using Information Technology in Projects

How to Organize: Special Meetings, Day Events, Camps



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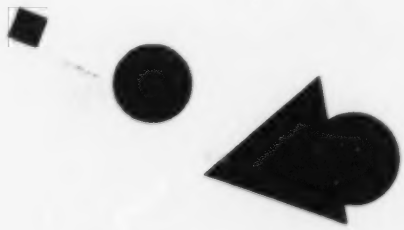

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Appreciation is expressed to Lyn Messner, Frank Wagner, and Kitenge N'Gambwa, Peace Corps specialists; Judee Blohm, Idea Book series editor; writer Margot Berkey; and Pat Bartlett, series designer and desktop publisher.

Introduction

The close relationship Peace Corps Volunteers develop with their communities and schools places them in a unique position to influence the behaviors and attitudes of the young women with whom they work. Workshops, camps, clubs, special events, and just friendly conversations, all have the potential to promote decision-making skills, encourage goal setting, and build confidence.

Dreaming, discovering, and growing is a life-long process. Volunteers can provide opportunities and serve as catalysts for this growth. Whether interacting with young women through schools, in communities, or in day-to-day exchanges, Volunteers have the potential to help girls change their lives for the better.

This booklet provides a collection of ideas and activities from Volunteers around the world to be used as a resource in the valuable work of empowering young women.

Making a compost pile — Guatemala

Things to Consider as You Read

This Idea Book might be considered a menu of ideas. When you look at a menu and think about ordering from it, you have to make some choices.

As you read this Idea Book, you will need to think of the appropriateness of the ideas you read. The choices you make will be based on different considerations. Here are some questions to guide your thinking:

1. What are my community's priorities? Does the idea correspond with what it wants to do, or is it just something I want to do? Have I included all members of the community in the process of identifying its needs (i.e., inclusive of age, sex, religion, ethnicity, race)?

2. How does this idea fit with other activities that I am doing in my project? How does this idea compliment other activities the community is doing?

3. How does it fit with what the Peace Corps is doing in this country? Is it in line with project activities?

4. How will it contribute to capacity building of the people with whom I am working? Have I taken into account community members' available time to participate in this activity? Have I included decision-makers as well as participants in the planning process?

5 Have all options for alternative or less costly materials been investigated? Have all local resources been tapped before looking outside for support? Could a local or national fund-raising activity provide the funds needed for the project? If outside sources are sought, am I discouraging building the local economy and creating dependency instead of self-reliance?

6 In what ways will this idea lead to sustainable development? Is the activity sustainable?

Imagining The Gambia

Helpful Tips for Organizing an Event

Many Volunteers and program managers worldwide organize activities and events with their counterparts to promote and support girls' education. These events can take a variety of forms: conferences, camps, education panels, workshops, or contests, to name a few. The following points were developed in a Peace Corps country as general guidelines to help in organizing a girls' education activity. For additional information on participatory tools for working with communities, consult your program manager and/or refer to the ***Gender and Development Training/Girls' Education*** manual [ICE no. M0054]. These materials offer ideas for how to work with groups to identify interests and needs, meeting places, and meeting times using ***Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA)*** [ICE no. M0053].

1 Needs Assessment

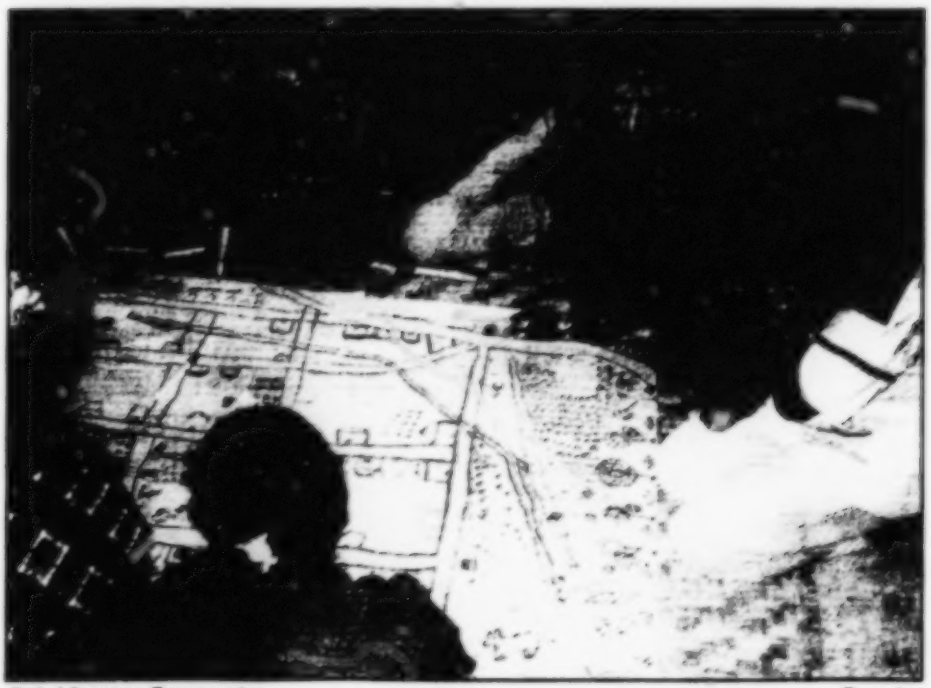
Who: The first step is to find out if there are already groups established that are working with girls to promote and support their education. Ask local school officials, teachers, parent/teacher associations, health workers, religious organizations, government organizations, and girls themselves. The people you work with should include men, women, boys and girls across racial, ethnic, age, and religious lines.

What and why: Once you have established a group of people with whom to work, find out what are some areas of concern they have about girls' lives. What do the girls like about school? What don't they like about school? What is going well in their lives? What do they wish were different? Why do girls attend or not attend school? What are their dreams? What are their parents' dreams for them?

Asking such questions as the ones above can help you and your group start to identify possible issues and what types of events might be most beneficial to address them. In this booklet, you will find many examples of different types of events.

2 Plan

In planning meetings, make sure that people who are interested and committed are involved. Also make sure that community decision-makers are aware of your plans and involved as appropriate. Sometimes, Volunteers can be more effective in helping others take ownership of the event by taking the role of facilitator rather than leader of the meetings. Make sure that men and women are represented, and that someone is there who can assist in informing the community of the event you are planning. Decide in advance who will run the meeting, and plan your agenda in advance. (A sample meeting agenda can be found on page 10.)



Girls Mapping Community — Ecuador

3 Brainstorm

With the group, or with key members of the group, brainstorm a detailed plan of what needs to be done to prepare for the event. Will refreshments be needed? Who needs to be notified? How should the meeting place be reserved? What materials will be needed and how will they be obtained? Assign a person or group of people to be responsible for each task.

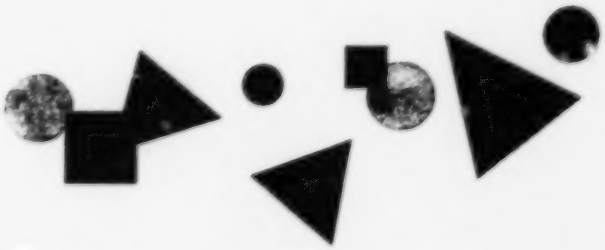
4 Follow-up Meeting

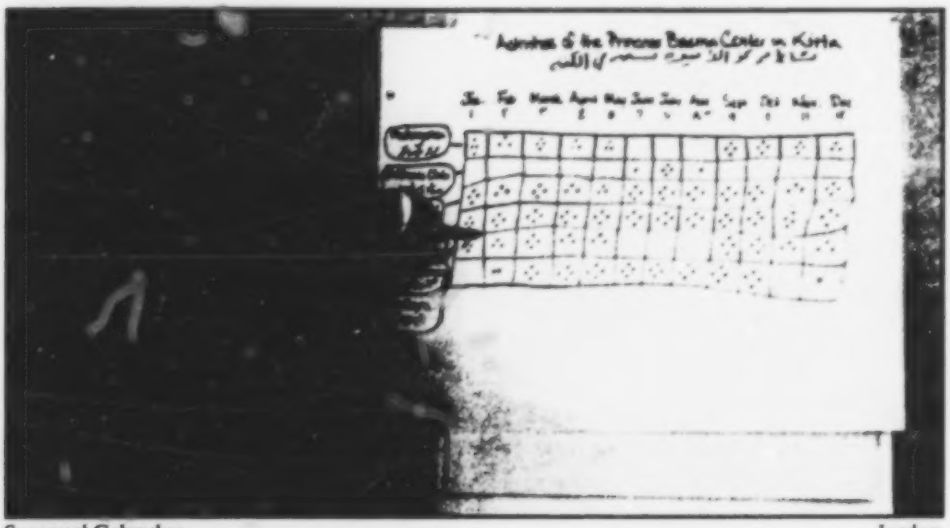
Set up a follow-up meeting to make sure the work is getting done—be specific with a date, time, and location.

5 Inform Everyone

Once the group has decided on what they would like to do, and where and when they would like to do it, inform all groups, associations, and others who might be interested. Volunteers have often found that it is best to have people who are tied into these groups announce it to them. For example, have someone respected who attends the Mosque announce the event at Friday prayer.

6 Hold the Event





Seasonal Calendar Jordan

7 Evaluate the Event

Evaluate the event and the work that led up to it so that the group can identify what worked and what did not. This will help the group begin to monitor the impact of the activity. Lessons learned from the event can be applied to planning future events.

8 Celebrate

Events such as these can have a profound impact on girls' lives, on shaping their hopes and dreams and expectations. Plan for a time after the event to celebrate with the girls their accomplishments.

9 Develop an Action Plan

For an activity to be sustainable, it is critical to plan actions that follow an event. How are participants encouraged to take action or share what they learned when they return to their community? How will these community activities be monitored?

Sample Girls' Education Event Planning Meeting Agenda

1) Explain the purpose of the meeting.

2) Have people introduce themselves.

3) Review some of the information gathered about girls in the community, and their interests and needs. Maybe have some girls present to explain this themselves.

4) Ask for the group's reactions to and ideas on the information presented. Ask what type of event to hold. PACA tools are useful here for processing many different ideas and prioritizing them.

5) Decide on the event.

6) Create a list of issues that need to be discussed to make the event happen:

   - Date: When should the event be held? The group may want to use the Daily Activities or the Seasonal Calendar in the PACA manual to help determine the most opportune time to hold the event. For example, holding the event during school vacation may enable more girls to attend, or, may make attendance impossible due to field work or other duties the girls must perform when not attending school.

   - Location: Where should the event(s) be held? Where are such events usually held? What location would enhance participation of girls? Of community members? For example, if female teachers will participate, they may be constrained from attending if they are required to spend a night away from their families. In such instances, conveniently located, local meeting places are preferable.

- **Procedure: What needs to be done to prepare for the event? Who will do what? Are both women and men involved? Are both men and women contributing to the preparation? Are both men and women making decisions?**

- **Speakers: Who needs to be invited? Who has knowledge or insight into the proposed topic? Who might be an appropriate role model for the girls? What resources are available in the immediate community? Who else might be willing to participate as a guest speaker?**

- **Guests: Who should be invited to attend or participate in the event? What officials or representatives should be invited? Are there any female officials who could attend?**

Mentoring for Empowerment and Leadership

What is a mentor? Webster's dictionary defines a mentor as: "A wise and trusted teacher or counselor." Mentoring, as a form of teaching, learning and assisting, originally began when Odysseus, King of Ithaca, asked his trusted friend Mentor, to look after his son Telemachus while he fought in the Trojan War.

Mentors can be friends, relatives, co-workers, teachers, or generally an older or more experienced person who acts as a role model, a guide, an advisor, or a challenger. Youth can mentor adults as well.

Some examples of mentoring include:

- An adult who encourages and assists girls in nontraditional areas and provides a safe place for them to grow and learn.
- An older girl who helps a younger girl cope with peer pressure or relationships.
- An alumna who provides guidance to girls on career choices.
- A student who demonstrates a skill or hobby to a friend or sibling not in school.
- An adult who assists girls in developing practical life skills, including leadership, communication, and decision-making.

- A professional woman who shares her experiences with a girl, introducing her to different perspectives and opportunities.

Each of these examples can serve the crucial function of empowering girls for action. On the following pages you will read about several mentoring activities in which host country women, Volunteers, and peers carry out successful endeavors that help girls become leaders by increasing their self-esteem, sense of self-worth, and awareness of their potential and the options available to them. Successful mentoring allows girls to explore, make mistakes, and learn about their strengths. In many places around the world, Volunteers are creating meaningful mentoring relationships based on events such as "Take Our Daughters to Work" Day.

Take Our Daughters to Work — Romania

Take Our Daughters to Work

The Ms. Foundation for Women offers information on the origin and intent of "Take Our Daughters to Work" Day. The following is an excerpt from their website.

"In the early '90s, research on girls detailed the radical and distressing shift that often occurs in the lives and self-esteem of girls in early adolescence. As adolescence begins, girls show a significant drop in self-esteem, report a lowered sense of self-worth, and describe intense feelings of insecurity about their own judgments and emotions.

We created "Take Our Daughters to Work" Day so we could help girls stay strong and remain confident.... This is a day to focus on girls' abilities rather than appearances. We believed a day at work, particularly a day watching women in the workplace, would help heighten girls' aspirations.... It's a day for girls to envision the possibilities for their future! We encourage you to approach the Day more broadly—to focus positive attention on girls' abilities, to urge girls to speak their minds, and to encourage girls to trust their own judgment.

We created this day of action because research overwhelmingly shows that one caring adult's attention can change the course of a girl's life. Participate in this day to help keep all of our daughters strong and healthy."

See page 60 for contact information.

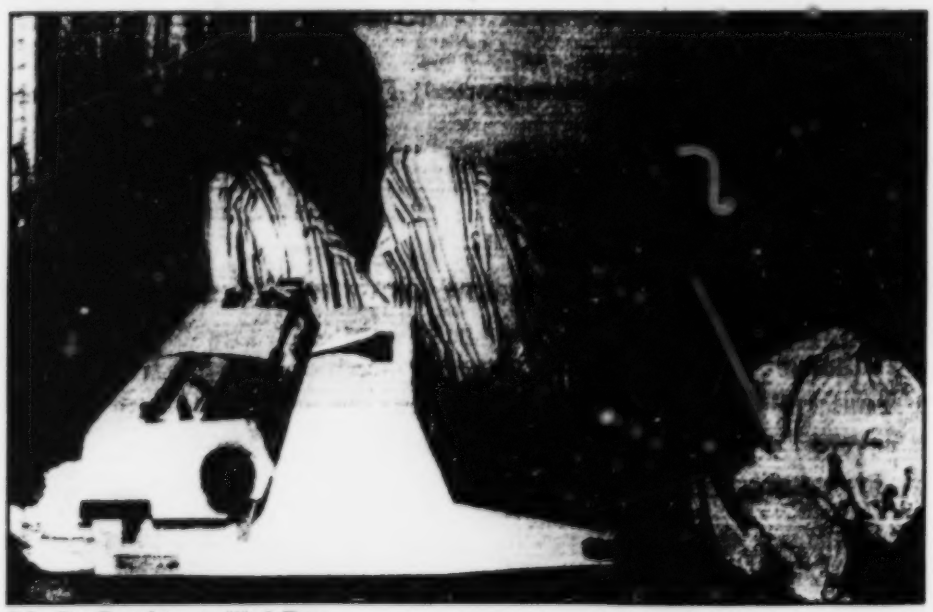
"Take Our Daughters to Work" Day is celebrated by Volunteers in countries such as Benin, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte D'Ivoire, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Romania, Senegal, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The day is celebrated in a variety of ways to achieve the following objectives:

1. To increase girls' levels of awareness about new career opportunities that exist in their country.

2. To increase girls' knowledge of skills that bolster self-esteem and self-awareness through classroom exercises.

3. To improve a networking system between girls and working women.

4. To increase the knowledge of community members about the different needs of adolescent girls.



Take Our Daughters to Work Day

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"Take Your Daughters To Work" Day Tips

There are many variations of this type of day and some require more organizing and financing than others, depending on the plan. The suggestions below are drawn from several sources, including the Ms. Foundation for Women in New York. Choose whatever ideas fit your plan. The Peace Corps Women in Development Coordinator in Washington may be able to provide more guidance.

Planning Questions

- Where will girls come from (towns, rural areas) and where will they visit? Volunteers have found that holding these events in regional towns rather than national capitals is more beneficial and sustainable.
- How will girls be selected? How long will it take to complete the process?
- How many girls can be accommodated?
- How will the hosting female workers be selected?
- How will the girls be transported? How many adult chaperones are needed?
- How long will they stay: only during the day, overnight?
- What will the program be on the day (or two days) of the event?
- What supplies and materials are required / desired (such as written materials for participants and hosts, invitations to any special events, name tags, certificates, t-shirts or other memorabilia, lessons for classrooms, and so on)?

- What other expenses are anticipated (for example, telephone calls, letters, postage, meeting expenses, transportation, meals, overnights)?

- Where is funding available? How long in advance must fundraising begin?

- How many people are needed for the planning and organizing committee? Can older girls help plan the event for younger ones, thus learning other skills?

Who Needs to Be Involved?

The girls, their parents, and their female hosts need to be involved. However, others could benefit from being involved, such as the girls' teachers and classmates (including boys), their community, and the community that they are visiting. Below is a list of potential ways various people or groups might be included, and the types of preparation they may need.

Girls

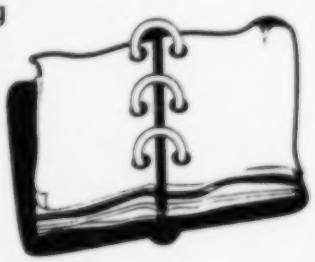
- Age levels acceptable for program
- Selection process:
  - essays?
  - school work?
- Preparatory discussions:
  - their role in the event
  - professional and domestic roles of women
  - preconceived concepts: write what they think it will be like beforehand
  - explore their dreams, skills, talents

- Preparation for the day:
  - practice interviewing
  - practice introducing and talking about themselves, their family, school, and community
  - appropriate dress, handmade card or gift for hostess, logistics
  - receive any materials: letters, notebook, and so on
  - expectations for sharing upon their return

Parents

- Individual or group meeting to inform or assure them about:
  - educational value
  - adult supervision, safety
  - time table and logistics
  - what the girls should wear and take with them
  - preparation they can assist with (see list of discussion topics under Girls, above)

Tip



Make your work to establish mentoring arrangements sustainable by creating a file or data base of information on the mentors who become involved in the project. It's important to collect basic information such as name, work address, telephone and fax numbers, job titles and brief descriptions, what interested them about mentoring, and how they plan to spend time with the girl they mentor. When mentoring experiences are completed, you can keep copies of the evaluations of mentors in the file. This set of materials will be enormously valuable to those who continue the mentoring project in future years.

- Include some as chaperones, as appropriate
- Encourage follow-up when girls return home:
  - discuss what their daughters did and learned
  - write a thank you letter to their mentor and keep in touch with her
- Encourage male and female household members to support the educational and career aspirations of both boys and girls

Mentors

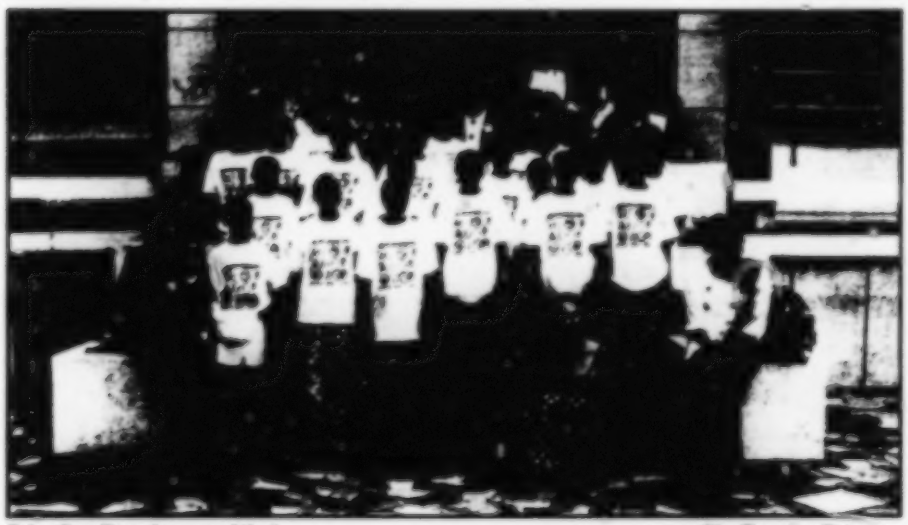
- Explain purpose of day, expectations of them (amount of time, types of activities, whether it includes overnight)
- Explain that they should be prepared to talk about own aspirations, education, challenges, and strategies to overcome them
- Offer suggestions for what they can do with girls at their work place:
  - observe/interview them and others, doing small tasks
  - observe a meeting, panel or discussion with other women at work
  - take a tour of the facility
  - present the girls with a memento of their experience such as a letter on company letterhead, certificate, sample paycheck for day's work

Tip

Make sure to help the girls prepare for their time with a mentor. Orient the girls to the mentoring experience including logistics and expectations. Brainstorm some questions they can ask the mentor to learn more about her job, her life, women's roles in the society, what she thinks the future holds, and so on. It is important for the girls to know that they have the right to ask questions. Clarify how the girls will share the results of their individual experiences with others when the mentoring experiences are completed.

School

- Obtain permission for girls to be absent
- Encourage school leaders and teachers to integrate the experience into the curriculum for all students, both boys and girls, including such topics as:
  - dreams, skills, interests—relating them to types of jobs and educational levels
  - how to present themselves: who they are, describe their family and community
  - how to interview someone about their work
  - some careers are designated male or female: why? (panel presentations)
- Assign all students to interview someone about their work; have them present their reports along with the girls who were selected for the special project



Take Our Daughters to Work — São Tomé et Príncipe

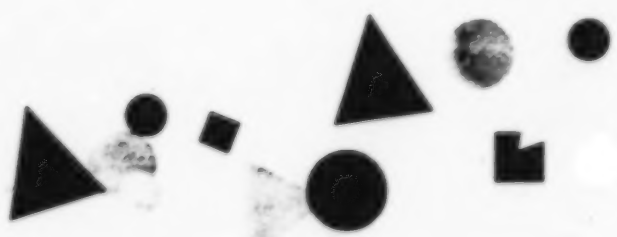
Community

- Create a local program if selected girls must travel to other cities Volunteers have found that holding these events in regional towns rather than national capitals is more beneficial and sustainable

- Involve the community in whatever ways possible:
  - work in coalition with groups within the community (for funding, for hosting girls, for providing needed materials or speakers for the classroom)
  - hold a town meeting
  - involve friends and relatives of the students
  - have girls identify role models
  - target and include girls from diverse backgrounds
  - work with the media
  - compile a fact sheet on women in the local work force
  - involve the business community

Follow-up

- Send thank you notes to all participants
- Send thank you notes to others who helped with the event
- Have the girls write up reports or evaluations
- Send evaluations to all mentors involved
- Submit final reports to all donors
- Seek recommendations for who is willing to start organizing for the following year



A Special Mentor

Why would a mother of seven, with nine grandchildren, invite a total stranger into her home? She still has one child living at home with her and her husband, not to mention two grandchildren. Why did she do this?

The reason is twofold. One, Mrs. Christine Chatepa is an incredible woman. Two, she was participating in the first girls' career day to be sponsored by Peace Corps Zambia's Women in Development (WID) Committee.

The WID Committee decided that their first activity would be a Girls' Career Day. Fifty-five girls from three provinces participated. Friends, both in the U.S. and in Zambia, donated money for this endeavor. Zambian women offered to host the girls. Hosting involved sharing home and work experiences with school girls. The goal of the activity was to encourage girls to stay in school.

Mrs. Christine Chatepa hosted Gertrude Chilwanda, a grade seven student. Both live in the Northern Province. Gertrude went to the Provincial capital, Kasama, where Mrs. Chatepa lives and works. Mrs. Chatepa works for the Community Development Office.

Mrs. Chatepa was a great role model for Gertrude. All seven of Mrs. Chatepa's daughters have received, or are receiving, an education. The careers and schooling of the Chatepa daughters include a housewife, two bookkeepers, one teacher, one nurse, and one hotel manager, with the youngest daughter currently in grade seven.

When asked why she hosted Gertrude, Mrs. Chatepa said, "Education is important for both girls and boys." During the visit, Gertrude was treated like a member of the Chatepa family. She even visited the older daughters who live in Kasama.

Gertrude told Mrs. Chatepa that school was hard. She had to drop out one year because of family problems. Gertrude was also held back a level because she couldn't pass her exams. Mrs. Chatepa told Gertrude that these problems are quite common. She shared with Gertrude that her grandson, who is in grade nine, was also held back a year. Gertrude was told that the main thing is to keep trying.

Mrs. Chatepa and Gertrude had a wonderful time together. Mrs. Chatepa has invited Gertrude to visit during her school holidays. Gertrude has promised that she will study hard and stay in school. Gertrude wants to finish grade twelve. Special mentors like Mrs. Chatepa can truly have a positive influence on the lives of young women.

LUNA INTERNSHIP

Objectives: To expose young women to professional environments and successful mentors; to teach the young women at least one new, concrete skill.

Schedule: Every business day for four weeks during the school vacation.

Participants: Each intern is matched with her own mentor who will supervise the young woman's work and create a learning schedule. The mentors should be women so that the intern can learn what it's like for a woman to be in the workforce and how she balances her work responsibilities and her home responsibilities. If no one woman in the organization has the time to continuously supervise the intern, then a team of mentors should be established before the intern arrives.

Location: Hold the internship at a professional work site, such as an office, a retail store, a fish station, a farm, a tailor's workshop, and so on, preferably in a town near the participant's home.

Logistics: If the young woman does not live within commuting distance of the workplace, housing needs to be provided for her. Per diem should also be allocated for food and transportation costs. A notebook, writing implements, and a workspace should be designated.

Activities: Have one main project planned for the intern to accomplish during the stay. This project should be tied to the skill she is learning. For example: create a poetry

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anthology (learn to use a word processor), help with the summer fish harvest/stocking (learn how to work a fish pond), or sew her own school uniform (learn how to design and stitch clothing). Other activities should be included to fill down time and to prevent monotony. Possible suggestions: daily journal writing, arts and crafts session at the end of every week, interviews with other employees in the organization to provide insight into what other jobs are available, field trips to other internship sites.

Other: Consider having a closing ceremony to congratulate the girls for their accomplishments and to provide the girls with an opportunity to thank all the people who worked with them. Certificates, small thank-you gifts, and refreshments add a nice sense of closure to the project.

Costs to Consider:

- Intern's travel
- Intern's per diem
- Art supplies
- Closing party

Good Ideas that Worked!

- Establishing "ground rules" on dress, punctuality and behavior appropriate to the workplace
- Focused project, clear objectives, daily schedules
- Variety of activities

Activities to Try!

- Field trips to collaborating agencies and/or other interns' work sites
- Continued mentoring contact after the internship

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Sample Weekly Schedule:

This is a schedule taken from an office internship. The intern's main project was to type poetry on a computer in order to create an anthology of young women's works. The skill learned in conjunction with this project was word processing. Most mornings were dedicated to learning how to manipulate the word processing program and entering poems into the computer. The afternoons were used for other activities, some of which pertained directly to accomplishing the anthology while others aimed at providing enriching experiences for the intern. Fridays were always a half day.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8–9 am	Journal writing	Journal writing	Journal writing	Journal writing	Journal writing
9–10:15 am	Work with mentor	Work with mentor	Work with mentor	Work with mentor	Work with mentor
10:15–10:30 am	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:30–Noon	Practice typing	Practice typing	Practice typing	Practice typing	Practice typing
12–2 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Make string bracelets
2-3 pm	Choose magazine theme	Interview in-house accountant	Choose poems	Discuss layout ideas	Half day/ start weekend
3-4 pm	Discuss layout ideas	Work with secretary		Work with secretary	
4-5 pm	Learn how to budget		Discuss layout ideas		

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International Womens' Day

International Women's Day is celebrated worldwide on March 8. It was started in 1908 in New York City. Female immigrant workers from the needle trades joined forces with women from the tenements and marched to Union Square demanding higher wages, better living and working conditions, and the right to vote. That march so inspired socialist women in Europe that they had the Socialist Conference of 1910 proclaim March 8 International Women's Day. Since then, countries around the world celebrate International Women's Day.

Peace Corps Volunteers in more than fourteen nations around the globe join the celebrations in their countries and contribute in a variety of ways. Explore events that are being planned in your country, and plan additional events that support those. Below are some of the ways Volunteers have celebrated International Women's Day:

- Public debates on the rights of women in marriage and child bearing
- Mentoring activities for girls, such as "Take Our Daughters to Work" Day
- Drama on women and AIDS
- Women's Work Day Fair
- Performing plays and singing songs about the importance of girls' education at primary schools
- Poster contests depicting women at work
- Organizing women's and girls' groups to build homes with Habitat for Humanity for single-female-headed households
- Seminars on women's and family rights, and women and health

(continued)

- **Festivals in a national park celebrating women and the environment**
- **Soccer matches with girls and women**

International Women's Day — Dominican Republic

Girls Leading Girls

A Volunteer in Tanzania found herself to be the only math teacher in a school of 800 girls. In order to cope with the teacher shortage, she started a "Girls Teaching Girls" program. Each Monday, a group of 12th grade girls would meet with the Volunteer to review the lesson. Lesson plans, including presentation, homework and evaluation, were written. These girls then arranged their schedules so they could teach all of the 9th grade classes that week. The younger girls were very receptive to their new teachers and thrilled to have a math teacher. The older girls appreciated the needed review of these math topics and relished their new role, experiencing the joy of teaching. For all the girls, important relationships were formed which carried beyond the classroom.

Volunteers Mentor Girls and Boys as Leaders in Health and Environment Issues

A Volunteer in Honduras developed an educational component to involve girls, boys, and women more in water and sanitation projects. In a small, rural village located on the north coast of Honduras, twenty students (eleven girls and nine boys) from a local high school were trained as leaders by the Volunteer with support from the local health promoter and three school teachers. The girls and boys were trained in leadership development, sustainable water and sanitation projects, health education and environmental activities, and community organization. After the training, the young leaders, teachers, and the Volunteer went to primary schools and gave talks on hygiene, nutrition, safe use of drinking water and latrines, trash collection, and environmental games. In addition to other activities, they built eight trash cans to be located in public places and conducted hygiene campaigns. Currently, the girls and boys are promoting safe drinking water and latrines through talks in the schools and visits to the poorest areas of the community.

Clubs

Clubs provide a way for girls to engage in shared interests, serve community needs, and spend time together in a trusting environment discussing a range of issues affecting their lives and their futures. Clubs can be based around a variety of themes: science, math, English, dance, drama, art, hiking, computer, business skills, environmental education, health, nutrition and cooking, among others. Volunteers conduct clubs in more than 28 countries worldwide. Various experiences with clubs are described in the following articles.

Starting a Club?

Just because something doesn't work out the way we plan doesn't mean that it won't work out.

Case in point: The Fougamou Women's Club in Gabon. This club is composed of four loyal and a couple of occasional secondary school students who gather at a Volunteer's house every Tuesday afternoon. Recently, the girls became occupied with a catch-up English course at school. The group decided to reschedule the meetings to Monday evenings—no big deal.

Had this group, however, turned out to be what the Volunteer had envisioned, changing the meeting time would have been impossible and four girls would have had to leave the group. Had the wide variety of women who—the Volunteer originally hoped would show up joined the group, they would have been obliged to hold to the Tuesday afternoon schedule.

The Volunteer had such wonderful plans for a group composed of many diverse women gathering together, sharing and learning from each other. After the first two meetings, when only a few timid students showed up, the Volunteer became a bit discouraged. What about her big plans?

Now she couldn't be happier with the way the group turned out. They can be flexible and change a date. They can meet at the Volunteer's house instead of at a large space. They can bake cookies, make colored candles, construct Christmas cards, and basically just hang out and be "women" together.

One of the most rewarding experiences the Volunteer has had with the group was the evening they all sat and talked about family planning—options to early motherhood and ways to avoid unwanted pregnancy. In the Volunteer's estimation, the discussion had the potential to change the future of four bright, energetic, special girls.

In some ways the girls have changed the Volunteer's future as well. They've helped her to realize that one woman's failure is often another woman's success, and to give up on ideas before giving them a chance could be a mistake you'll never even realize you've made.

Girls Form Agricultural Club

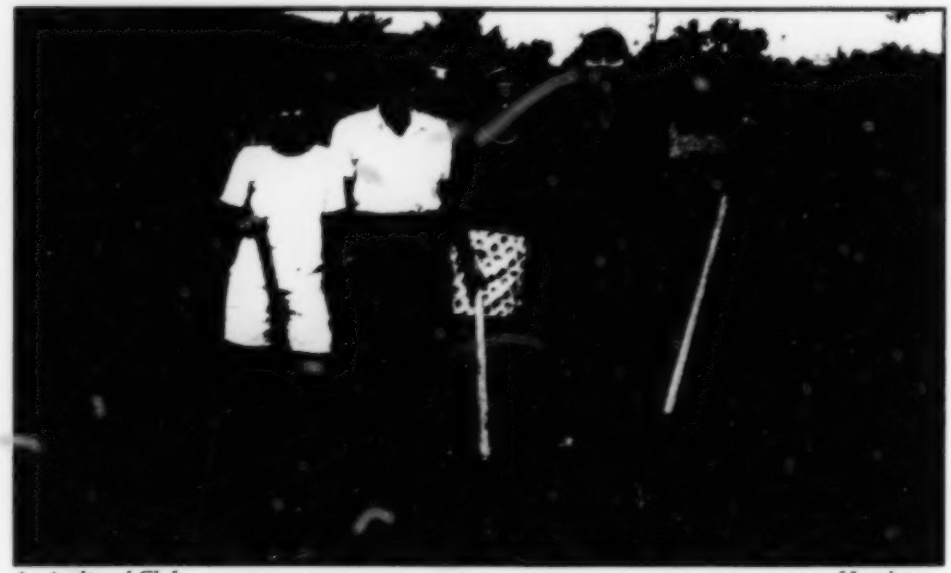
A Volunteer was assigned to a village in rural Honduras as an agriculture extentionist. She was told that she would mainly be working in basic grains with male subsistence farmers, or *campesinos*. Well, one year into her service, most of her energies have been devoted to women and children, the other part of the population.

In a country where women have to ask permission to go to a town meeting or to the village general

You can create membership cards for the girls in a club with a simple computer design and printout. You and the girls will feel a sense of pride to be members and to display the card, and you will also have a formal way to welcome new members to the club.

store, she has found home gardens to be a very appropriate and necessary means of women's empowerment.

Most rewarding has been working with a group of seven young women at a nearby technical high school. In the past, the *muchachas* (young women) devoted all of their time to learning how to sew, but with the help of the school director they reincorporated agriculture into their curriculum for better family nutrition.



Agricultural Club Honduras

The project focuses on nutrition and requires the young women to work on their own individual home gardens in their respective villages. The *muchachas* have a rotating schedule of one week in the center in El Carbon, followed by two weeks in their home putting what they have learned into practice. The young women were initially apprehensive about their ability to work in agriculture, but as evident by the look of pride on their faces after completing a job well done, their eyes have been opened to their infinite capabilities.

The empowerment does not end with the women's ability to successfully grow and produce vegetables, but carries on with their newfound role of teaching some of the new techniques that they have learned to others, including male *campesinos*.

Camps and Conferences

Around the world, Volunteers in more than 30 countries are organizing camps and conferences designed to build self-esteem, leadership and ultimately empowerment of girls. Programs such as these often require partnerships for funding, along with careful planning and preparation. See the Resource section for additional materials you can request to help you develop similar programs.

Goals for Camp Events include:

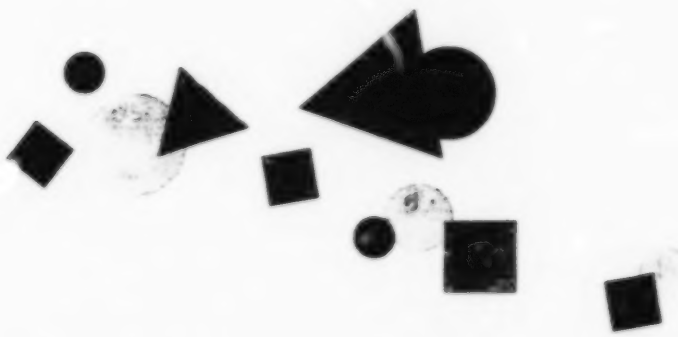
- Preparing girls to better meet educational and life challenges
- Encouraging and assisting girls to stay in school
- Developing talents and practical life skills including English language, goal setting, communication, leadership and decision-making skills
- Expanding the horizons of participants by exposing them to different experiences, opportunities, and role models
- Providing a safe environment for girls to experiment, make mistakes and have fun

Topics and activities can include:

- Additional academic training in English, science, or mathematics
- Participation in sports, games, crafts, arts
- Development of study skills

- Exploration of educational, life, and career opportunities
- Participation in exercises designed to build self-esteem
- Exploration of gender roles
- Development of practical life skills including leadership, decision-making, and communication skills
- Developing and conducting presentations for peers, families, and communities
- Learning about personal health and local environment and
- Development of physical abilities and self-confidence through programs patterned after Outward Bound

These activities are implemented in a variety of formats, ranging from a few hours on a weekend to two weeks. Some camps take place over a number of weeks and participants just spend several hours a day or week at the camp and the rest of the time they engage in their normal school break activities. Alternatively, these activities can be integrated into an after-school club. Camps, conferences and retreats can be held at schools, other locations within the community or at locations outside of the community. Peace Corps countries with camps and retreats include Bulgaria, Cameroon, Estonia, Latvia, Madagascar, Moldova, Paraguay, Poland, Romania, Thailand, Turkmenistan and Ukraine.



Girls Leading Our World Camps

The Women in Development Committee in Poland organized a seven-day Girls Leading Our World Camp (Camp GLOW). The enthusiasm of five Volunteers and three Polish counselors, plus the energy of the 35 young female campers, ages 13–19, resulted in a huge success.

Each day before breakfast, there were optional exercise sessions ranging from yoga to aerobics to kickboxing. During the day, GLOW campers attended interactive sessions on topics such as self-esteem, values, goal-setting and team building. There were artistic self-expression sessions, which were universally popular. Early in the week, the campers made extraordinarily creative self-portraits and later in the week, they depicted their relationship with nature using everything from dirt to paint. On different evenings, they sang, had an ice cream social, a bonfire and an eclectic talent show.

Camp GLOW Poland

In addition to developing leadership skills and a greater understanding of themselves, the GLOW participants focused on democracy. The campers formed parties, wrote party platform speeches, elected a president and ran a mock Congressional session. The outcome of the Congress was the creation of five Camp GLOW clubs through which

the young women can continue the spirit of Camp GLOW in their respective high schools. A participant captured the spirit of GLOW when she commented one day to a counselor, "Before coming to GLOW we were like small plants. At Camp GLOW, people watered us and now we have blossomed."

Camp GLOW acknowledged each camper with a recognition award, from books to magazine subscriptions, and a t-shirt designed by one of the campers.

Camp GLOW was started by Volunteers in Romania and has since been replicated in Armenia, Bangladesh, Estonia, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Lesotho, Macedonia, Moldova, the Philippines, Poland, and Slovakia.

Building for Girls' Self-Esteem

Peace Corps/Bolivia held a four-day conference for 25 girls from communities surrounding Tarija, Bolivia, named "Building the Futures of Bolivian Women." The objectives were to motivate the girls to continue studying and learning, to be leaders in their communities, and to empower them to care for their personal health.

On the first day, the girls participated in a variety of activities which helped them understand the importance of self-esteem. This included a skit by two Peace Corps Volunteers showing how one's self-esteem can easily be torn down. At one point the girls made a list of five things that they could not do, such as "I cannot dance." Then, they tore up the lists and threw them to the ground. This helped the girls see that they can do almost anything they want if they put their minds to it. The girls then wrote their names on a big sheet of paper and wrote a positive adjective describing themselves with each letter of their name.

The next class focused on good communication skills. A Volunteer started speaking using "horrible public speaking skills." The girls had to help her change so that she would be a better speaker. After this, the girls broke into groups, were a given a topic to prepare, and then presented it using good communication skills. The second part of this class was centered on good listening skills. Two girls did two skits. The first illustrated poor listening skills. The second exemplified good listening skills.

The second day of the conference began with a class on gender roles by a Peace Corps Volunteer and a Bolivian counterpart. The girls made a list of things they thought only males could do or only females could do. They then listed characteristics of females and characteristics of males. The facilitators explained the difference between the terms gender roles and sex. By the end of the class the girls understood that society places gender roles on everyone, but we do not necessarily have to comply with these gender roles. They understood that they can do some things that generally are thought to be done only by males.

The class on how to set and realize goals began by having the girls make a human knot and trying to figure out how to unravel themselves; a goal that they did realize. Next the girls were led in a visualization activity. Each girl had to close her eyes and picture where she wanted to be in 1, 5, 15, and 20 years. They drew pictures of these goals and began thinking about the steps necessary to get there.

The last class of the day was given by a Bolivian woman on women's rights. This woman brought flipcharts with various laws supporting women's rights in Bolivia. She went through and explained each of them to the girls.

After the class the *madrinas* (godmothers) came to meet the girls they would be taking to their work the following morning.

The morning of the third day seemed to be the most exciting part of the conference for the girls. Each girl went to work for the morning with a Bolivian woman in the city of Tarija. Each girl was paired with

a woman whose work interested the girl. After spending the morning at work, the girls and the *madrinas* all came back to the conference site, had lunch together, and received certificates.

In the afternoon, a Bolivian professor came and spoke to the girls about different career opportunities. He described the universities and technical schools in Tarija. Then the girls visited various universities and technical schools according to their interests. After returning from

these visits, the girls presented what they learned about the university or technical school. Upon leaving the conference that day, each girl was given information regarding the universities and technical schools so that they could follow up on their goals of continuing their education.

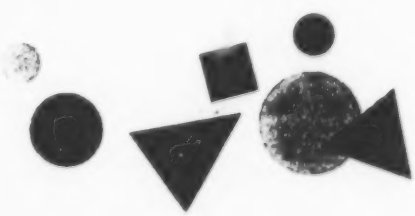
The last day of the conference began with a class on domestic violence given by a Bolivian woman who works with a domestic violence organization. She asked the girls questions about domestic violence, where it occurs, to whom it occurs, and why it occurs. Then she went through and helped the girls process the answers. She ended by telling them that the law protects all people against violence.

After a short break, a class on women's health was given by a Bolivian woman who works with a non-governmental organization, ProSalud. Using slides and videos, she spoke to the girls about how to care for their personal health.

Another Bolivian woman followed with a class on alcoholism. During this interactive class, the girls identified solutions to lower the amount of alcoholism in their communities. They also identified many consequences of alcoholism.

At the end of all the seminars, the Volunteers put together a slide show of pictures taken during the conference. Afterwards, each girl was presented a certificate.

Upon returning to their communities, the girls gave a presentation to their classmates on what they learned at the conference. In this way they were able to teach those who weren't able to come about what they learned.



Planning a Girls' Education Conference

The following lessons learned were submitted by Volunteers in Ghana, Guinea, Tanzania, and Togo.

1 Six to Nine Months in Advance

- Integrate host country nationals and counterparts into the planning to ensure the sustainability of the event. The more you share information and include people, the better your results will be and the less likely you are to offend people.

- Establish clear goals for the conference that consider the immediate and longer-range impact of the event on the girls.

- Consider the following questions regarding the participation of boys at the event:

  - Will it make the girls feel shy or threatened and therefore discourage them from speaking up?
  - What would we do if the boys begin to take over the event?
  - Should the girls and boys be introduced to gender awareness issues separately at first?
  - Would it help to separate them when discussing topics such as health and sexuality?
  - Can you maintain a safe, non-judgmental environment in which both girls and boys can speak freely?

- Plan the tentative schedule for conference. Make sure to include some fun activities such as visits to the airport, the theater, sightseeing, dancing, or sports.

- Offer regional conferences on various themes: leadership, education, health, sports, and other matters. Regional conferences can be a nice way to increase participation at a local level if the conference being planned is to be a national event.

- Set the date for the conference. The conference should not be scheduled at the same time as exams, holidays or during seasons when girls are needed at home.

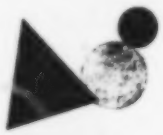
- Establish a budget that considers all kinds of expenses. You may need to do some creative planning to keep costs down. Choosing a centrally-located site will help. The earlier you plan, the more time you have to negotiate discounts or secure contributions of money and other needed materials or food for the event.

Sitting in a circle — Cameroon

- Make sure that all conference leaders/teachers understand the financial arrangements for the event so there are no misunderstandings.

- Begin seeking funds. If you want to increase the number of girls who can participate, you can allow them to do their own fund-raising to cover the conference fee. This will require special planning and preparation to work with the girls on how to conduct effective fund-raising. You can also seek funding to create a scholarship for the conference.

2 Four to Five Months in Advance



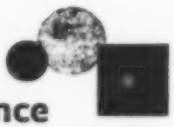
- Create an application form for the participation of girls, and send it out. The girls' application should include: school address and home address, the name and telephone number of the headmaster, and an essay asking about career aspirations. Include directions on the form asking the girl and a Volunteer nominating her to print their names and region. Contact headmasters so they can inform parents.

- Be alert for dynamic women speakers or mentors for the girls as you go about all aspects of the planning and outreach. When you find someone, ask her for referrals.

- Work with a task force of mentors and supporters to help find other mentors, speakers, venues, and other resources needed for the conference. Include a teacher on the panel of professionals.

- Create an application form for mentors and send it out. The mentors' application should include: space for their biography, telephone and fax number, address, and permission to distribute their addresses to the girls.

3 Two to Three Months in Advance



- Determine if you will require escorts to bring girls to the conference. Decide whom you will enlist for this responsibility. Choose the escorts and secure their commitment.

- Select the girls who will participate.

- Send letters of acceptance to the girl, the Volunteer, and the headmaster.

- Send letters of no acceptance as well.

- Include the following information in the letter to the Volunteers who proposed the participation of the girls who were selected: the escort's

phone number, a request to contact the escort and make travel arrangements for the girl.

- Choose the mentors who will participate. Match mentors with girls. Notify mentors.

- Send an orientation letter to the girl and the Volunteer including information about travel reimbursement, proper behavior, appropriate clothing, and other important logistics or expectation-setting information. You may want to create an agreement form that the girl signs and returns stating that she will abide by conference rules, be on time, participate in all aspects, etc. Establish and communicate a clear policy on visitors to the conference and on girls leaving the conference site.

- Design your meal plans for the event and make necessary arrangements. Serve a dish typical of the girls' home cooking on the first night of the conference. Avoid a spaghetti dinner as the girls may not eat it!

4 One Month in Advance

- Hold an orientation meeting for the mentors to stress the need for sensitivity to the backgrounds and customs of the girls and inform mentors of their role for the conference.

- Confirm with the speakers to make sure nothing unexpected is interfering with their participation, and to give yourself time to replace them with another speaker.

- Reconfirm all event plans (food, lodging, transportation, entertainment).

- Formulate a back-up plan for problems you can anticipate such as labor strikes, that may occur at the last minute.

- Arrange either for the travel and lodging costs of Volunteers, or the per diem for Volunteers who work before, during and after the conference.

5 At the Event

- Take lots of pictures that you can use in reports to current donors and presentations to prospective donors in the future.

6 After the Event

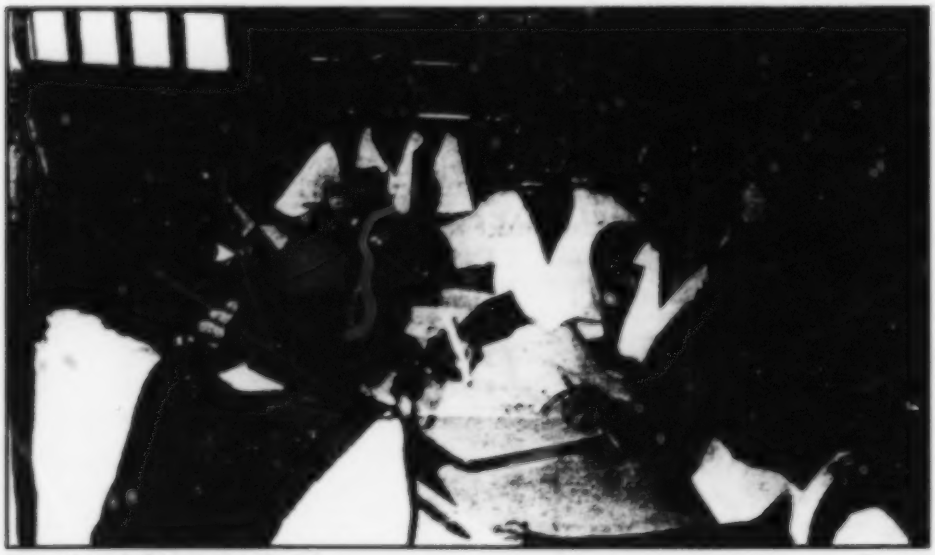
- Follow up the event with thank you letters to planning team members, mentors, speakers, service providers for the conference, and all others who held important roles in the success of the event.

- Plan how you will offer continued support to the girls for the many ways in which they can share what they've learned with others and keep the results of the workshop alive. Possibilities include clubs, smaller workshops with other girls in their communities, career days, peer tutoring, mother-daughter discussion groups or joint activities.

"Girls Help Each Other" Workshop

"Wasichana Wanasaidiana," or "Girls Help Each Other," was the name of a workshop organized by Tanzania Volunteers with the aim of increasing girls' self-confidence and motivation in school. In the morning, 29 girls from a co-educational junior-high-level day school, and approximately 200 students from a girls' secondary school gathered to hear about the experiences and advice of six prominent women from the community. Among the guest speakers were a local director of the international non-governmental organization World Vision, the principal of a nursing college, and the local District Commissioner.

The students listened intently as the women described their education, as well as their previous and present jobs. The guests were excellent reminders that women in Tanzania can be successful in any careers they choose. In response to students' questions, they also gave sound



Compiling daily activity schedules — Guyana

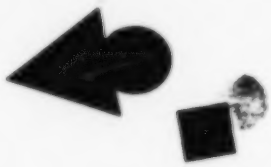
advice: set specific goals for yourself, both in school and out; strive for excellence in your studies; do not hide your talents and skills.

While the purpose was for the girls to gain pieces of wisdom from their elders, they were not the only ones to benefit. The guests, some of whom had never met before, enjoyed getting to know each other and exchanging views on girls' issues. They also expressed enthusiasm for collaborating on future activities to encourage and motivate female students.

In the afternoon, the girls from the co-ed junior high met with ten of the senior high school girls. Under the guidance of the Volunteer and two Tanzanian teachers, the girls were able to define issues or problems that they wanted to discuss. They then broke into groups by issue, with each discussion being led by one or two senior high school students. After half an hour of animated conversation, everyone reassembled and a spokesperson from each group shared the main points and conclusions of her group's discussion. Discussion topics included the particular problems faced by girls at a day school, ways to resist sexual pressure from boys, and the problem of parents who choose to educate their sons over their daughters. Hearing the

perspectives of the senior high school students, who have already faced many of these problems, was valuable and encouraging for the younger girls.

The day ended with the senior high school girls performing several songs about women's issues, and then teaching the songs to their younger peers.



Building Houses

A Volunteer in Malawi, assigned to teach math at an all-girls secondary school worked with girls to empower them with new values. In collaboration with Habitat for Humanity she organized a work team of her students. She had three goals: to build a house for someone who needed it; to boost the confidence and self-esteem of her students through working in a non-traditional role and seeing results; and to show the students that by volunteering their time they could make a difference in someone else's life. Fifteen girls and a female counterpart participated. During the seven days of this project the girls laid out and built all the interior and exterior walls of the house. They are excited about doing it again. Since this initial project, many other Volunteer teachers have organized similar programs with girls in their regions, mostly building for female-headed households.

To learn more about Habitat for Humanity or to see how girls in your area can collaborate on a similar project, refer to the Resources section, page 66.

Lesson Plan

YOUNG WOMEN'S SEMINAR

Objectives: To empower young women with information and opportunities to make well-informed choices in their lives, especially concerning reproductive health and study skills.

To integrate Volunteers from various programs into a WID-specific project.

Schedule: Two and a half days. Thursday evening to Sunday morning suggested.

Location: Preferably in a provincial capital or an easily accessible town. Space needed to house all the participants and all of the facilitators (Volunteers and counterparts) a dining area, a main room area, and smaller breakout areas.

Participants: Invite young women from surrounding towns who show scholastic motivation. (Outstanding grades are not essential, however, just a certain level of effort). A total of no more than 15 participants is suggested.

Possible topics: Reproductive health, study skills, women's rights, environmental awareness, malaria prevention, crafts, farming, fish culture, small business, women's history.

Organizers: The more organization that can be done on the local level, the better. However, the Peace Corps Volunteers and counterparts in the area are responsible for writing a budget, organizing the participants and the

housing and implementing workshops. The group designates who is responsible for locating funding and supplies and running logistics during the workshop.

Good Ideas that Worked!

- Using plastic cups
- Hand towels in bathrooms
- Name tags
- Address sheet
- Toiletries in bathrooms
- Medical kit
- Involving local businesses
- Involving local professional women
- Making cards
- Giving out certificates
- Counterparts leading sessions
- Former participants leading sessions
- Leadership activities
- Hands-on construction and farming sessions
- Talent show

Good Ideas Never Tried!

- Have Volunteers or girls cook/buy food for retreat
- Permission slips to parents
- Daily clean-up crew
- Grab-bag of gifts

Activities to Try!

- Jewelry making
- Selling art products to community
- Language lessons
- Journal writing
- Making a scrapbook of event by participants
- Drawing experiences

Organizer's Checklist

- ☐ Contact your WID staff person at post.
- ☐ Set date with WID committee and other Volunteers.
- ☐ Submit approximate budget and resource needs.
- ☐ Develop program according to objectives; write lessons and plan activities.
- ☐ Consider logistics: housing, food, transportation, toilets, and so on.
- ☐ Organize activities and implementation with other Volunteers.
- ☐ Implement Young Women's Seminar.
- ☐ Submit evaluation and document event.

Girls Can Do Anything!

This activity plan comes from Volunteers in Tanzania where it was introduced in 1997 at their inaugural Girls' Empowerment Workshop.

Objectives

1. To get the girls to think about all the possible careers open to them.
2. To create a banner as a memento of the workshop.

Time

1 1/2 hours

Materials

paper, pens, cloth for the banner (bed sheet or large piece of canvas), marking pens, paint, newspapers, materials for clean-up

Activity

This is a brainstorming activity and an art activity combined into one. First, the girls are divided into groups and challenged to come up with at least 100 different careers or jobs that a woman can have. When a group completes the list, each of its members is invited to dip her hand in paint and put her hand print on a banner that says "Girls Can Do Anything!" Below her hand print she writes any one of the 100 careers from the list and signs her name below it.

Ask the participants:

- What do you want to do when you finish school?
- How did you decide?
- Who are your role models?

54

Sports

Issues of self-esteem and assertiveness are addressed with play when Volunteers create opportunities for girls to engage in teamwork through sports. In the articles that follow you'll read about Volunteers who've asked a simple question, found a creative solution, dug in their cleats to insist on equal opportunities, and carried teamwork off the playing field and into the community.

Broom Hockey

It is six o'clock, and the morning sun is beginning to rise over Paraguay. A thin layer of dew from the night rests on the winter July grass of the soccer field, creating a surreal ice rink. The silence is disturbed by the sounds of laughing young women. Meet the young women's field hockey, or might I say "broom hockey," team of the local high school.

Every Wednesday morning, one can hear the Volunteer yelling "goal" or "foul" and the cheer and laughter of forty fourteen-year-old girls playing broom hockey for two intense hours.

What is broom hockey? Basically, all that is needed is a soccer field, a small durable ball (a medium soccer ball works well), and about twenty-two girls, each with an old broom. The girls play for two fifteen-minute halves, and use a combination of field hockey and soccer rules. The combination of rules works very well.

As you work with a team, consider taking time to chat about a range of girls' issues such as health and good nutrition, dealing with relationships, or the importance of staying in school. Your influence as coach can extend to much more than the girls' athletic achievement and confidence building.

Broom Hockey — Paraguay

These young women take their hockey very seriously. Bruised shins and occasional bleeding cuts are routine aspects of the experience. When the dust clears at the end of the session, they lick their wounds and look forward to the next week's competition.

In most Latin American countries, girls tend to develop incredible "broom handling" skills at a very young age. Not only are the broom hockey players using their acquired broom handling skills, but they are also using some basic soccer principles when controlling the ball. This combination of skill helps develop the girls' hand, eye, and body coordination skills, which are important and fundamental in the physical and motor development of youth.

In reality, though, the end product is that the girls find that they do have the ability to compete with the predominate male work force here in Paraguay, and they gain the self-confidence from the personal achievement of making a simple "goal." The young women learn that they are a part of the common thread of life. The "winning team" is a concept of excellence that teaches individuals to reach for the gold. US boxer Mohammed Ali said in 1972 that a person who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life.

Soccer for Mother's Day

Gabon and those who follow the French calendar celebrate Mother's Day on June 2. In a little town the mayor's wife organized an amazing day of activities—parade, dances, soccer match, dinner, and more dances. Even with the rain and wind and very cold weather, all the events were wonderful successes. The parade was a little short, but the soccer match was a huge success.

This was a unique match: the only men on the field were the referees. The women functionaries played against the high school girl students. This was a particularly important and proud moment since this was the first outing of the girls' soccer uniforms. The uniforms represented a lot because there had been so many attempts and pressure from various male soccer teams and officials to allow the uniforms to be used by male teams. However, the girls stuck to their ground and refused to allow anyone else to use them.

Girls Soccer Team — The Gambia

Although some might see the uniforms to be a petty issue, the girls took their situation seriously and asserted their desire instead of bending to the pressure of brothers, fathers, uncles, and boyfriends.

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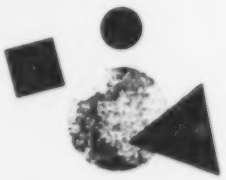
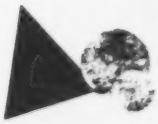
It was truly a pleasure to see the girls take pride in their team—in their own uniforms. Although some might see the uniforms to be a petty issue, the girls took their situation seriously and asserted their desire instead of bending to the pressure of brothers, fathers, uncles, and boyfriends. It was a proud moment to see the girls wear their own brand new uniforms, but more importantly to see them insist on their rights.



Soccer "Branches Out"

While soccer is the national sport in Honduras, very few females, especially in rural areas, have the opportunity to participate in any organized soccer activities. Still, one Peace Corps Volunteer teaches soccer to 20 teenage girls each afternoon. They have recently organized a small league and play weekend games against girls' teams in neighboring towns. In addition to the 20 girls on the team, approximately 100 girls in the area are now playing soccer as a result of the Volunteer's efforts. The Volunteer has also linked the team with her primary project work in agriculture by having the girls plant 30 trees around the soccer field.



Cross-Cultural Tip

Check assumptions! In Mauritania the fourth grade girls sat on benches in the shade during physical education class while the boys played soccer. Checking with the local teacher revealed a taboo against girls kicking a ball. Playing with a ball and running were not problems—just the ball to foot contact. Hand to ball contact was not taboo. So, the girls are now learning to play basketball in physical education class.

Some Other Great Activities!

- Climbing hills and mountains—combined with journal writing, singing, environmental awareness, reflection.
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Biking trips
- Volleyball
- Netball
- Basketball
- Baseball
- Softball
- Swimming
- Tae Kwon do

Softball Team Kyrgystan

Contests

More than 15 countries organize contests. The goals include increasing awareness of gender and girls' education issues, developing strategies to address them, as well as promoting critical, analytical, and creative thinking. Contests can take many forms: art, drama, quizzes, games, and essay writing. Contest topics have included a day in the life of a girl student, the importance of educating girls, and women who are role models to girls today. Most often these contests are open to boys and girls. Winners may receive a certificate, a prize, recognition in the local media, or be invited to attend a special event or activity. The Baltic Republics, Benin, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Ethiopia, Guinea, Malawi, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Slovakia and Tanzania are among the countries where Volunteers and their counterparts hold contests.

Things to Consider

Some things to consider if you plan to conduct a contest:

- Who is your target audience of contestants?
- Will you work through schools or other community groups?
- What will be the scope of the contest—Local? Regional? National?
- What will the topic(s) of the contest be? What do you hope the contestants will learn by taking part in the contest?
- How will you advertise it?
- How will you judge it? Who will the judges be?

- What prizes will you offer?
- What publicity would you like?
- Make sure you plan this event in collaboration with your community and that you allow adequate time to make it a great success.

Essay Contest

An essay contest on girls and women was organized by members of the International Women's Network, Peace Corps Volunteers, and English teachers from 19 towns and villages from the whole Czech Republic. Two hundred and nine students (35 male and 174 female students) from 45 towns and villages participated in the contest by writing an essay in English that addressed topics related to girls and women. This essay contest was sponsored by several public and private organizations: Royal Netherlands Embassy; Rank Xerox; Philips; GLOBE bookstore; Cokoladovny Praha; Levi Strauss; The Prague Post; Oxford University Press; RD System; and Gymnasium Vlasim. Students were asked to choose one of the topics below and write an essay in English.

Topics:

- There have been many heroines in both the country's history and mythology. Which of these heroines has meant the most to you? In your essay describe her life—what did she do to become a heroine? What difficulties did she have to overcome? And why is she important to you today?

- Think about one woman you admire and respect in today's world who would be a good role model for young people today. She does not have to be famous, but tell about her life, what you respect and admire about her, why she is different than other role models, and how she has influenced your life.

➡ The role of women in every society is different. Compare life for the typical woman in your country to the life of women in two other countries.

Poetry Contest

Benin held a poetry contest about women. The winners were presented with certificates, a copy of their poem, a small notebook and a pen. A second event was a quiz specifically related to the lives and accomplishments of women. The questions were taken from Beninese and international politics, cinema, art, science and history. All-in-all, the celebration was a success. It heightened the awareness of all members of the school community and provided an important outlet for each to learn about the importance of women in society.

Providing new horizons

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Life Skills Education

Empowerment is fostered when girls and women expand their appreciation of issues affecting their lives. Life skills education addressing health, safety, self-esteem, assertiveness, educational and career options has been accomplished in a range of ways as you will read in the following articles.

Strengthening Bonds of Mothers and Daughters

Peace Corps Thailand's Women in Development committee is comprised of Peace Corps Volunteers who are interested in supporting women and girls throughout Thailand. A WID-driven developmental project included mother-daughter training events held in eight separate locations throughout the North and Northeast entitled "Strengthening the Bonds of Thai Mothers and Daughters." The training programs were funded by the Harbor House Foundation, a local NGO.

Eight Peace Corps Volunteers hosted these events in the communities where they live. The WID committee created a structure for the training programs, compiled a resource book of activities, and secured funding. It was the community at each location, however, that was responsible for the coordination, adaptation of struc-

Self-awareness training Thailand

ture and activities based upon their needs, facilitation, and overall success of the training. By implementing training programs aimed at fostering the empowerment of mothers and daughters, they could address issues pertinent to their community. In addition, better understanding of oneself and one's family and community gave participants higher self-confidence in community leadership and development.

Each training provided participatory learning activities aimed at empowering girls, ages 10–12, and their mothers (or guardians). Each training was composed of six topics: self-awareness, awareness of differing viewpoints, communication skills, stress management, responsible decision-making, and basic understanding of puberty and reproduction.

A booklet of drawings, essays, ideas and photos from the events was published and distributed to all participants as a means to disseminate and reiterate the ideas generated from eight separate training events.

Life Skills Development

Providing life skills training in Malawi has been an ongoing effort to stem the rising tide of HIV/AIDS, sexually-transmitted disease (STDs), and teenage pregnancy. Coordinated by a Volunteer, this program utilizes games, role plays and interactive exercises to teach life skills such as communication, decision-making, critical thinking skills, assertiveness, resistance to peer pressure, relationship skills, managing emotions, new values for boys, and empowerment of girls. Through this program, Volunteers have launched successful programs all over the country, including: a district-wide program; pilot projects; a variety of girls' clubs; and regional initiatives through the Northern, Southern, and Central Women in Development chapters. The success of these projects has prompted an interest in adding Life Skills to the curriculum in Malawi through UNICEF and the World Bank.

Recognizing girls

In addition, the Peace Corps in Kenya, South Africa, and Lesotho are exploring the addition of Life Skills to their programming. Peace Corps/Malawi has just expanded its Life Skills Program by adding 30 new trainers to its cadre of those qualified to teach this approach. A training of trainers session brought together Volunteer health workers and their counterparts and Volunteer teachers and their counterparts from all over the country.

Perhaps the most exciting news is a Volunteer initiated, produced, and developed publication of a Life Skills Manual. Compiled by a Volunteer with local community support, as well as adaptations from sources throughout Southern Africa and beyond, this book provides trainers with over 40 lesson plans and activities, a background to the Life Skills approach, sample training schedules, visual aids, and more. Copies will be distributed to those interested in implementing Life Skills in their communities or schools. In addition, UNICEF is interested in publishing and distributing copies to interested programs in Malawi.

The Life Skills Manual is under revision and will be available from ICE.

Resources

New Moon: The Magazine for Girls and Their Dreams, New Moon Publishing, Inc.

New Moon is an international magazine for girls who want to express their ideas and dreams. Girls ages 8 to 14 and girl contributors from all over the world edit or contribute to the magazine. *New Moon* celebrates girls, explores the passage from girl to woman, and builds healthy resistance to gender inequities. Subscriptions available by accessing the New Moon website: www.newmoon.org.

The Exchange: Peace Corps' Women in Development Newsletter

The Exchange is published quarterly by Women in Development, The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research, Peace Corps/ Washington, DC and distributed to all Volunteers and Trainees. Each issue contains the success stories, project results, photos, and commentary from Peace Corps Volunteers involved in Women in Development and Gender and Development projects around the world. To contribute to this publication, please contact: Editor, The Exchange/ Women in Development/ Peace Corps—The Center/ 1111 20th Street, NW/ Washington, DC 20526 USA memry@peacecorps.gov.

MS. Foundation for Women. Source of information on a "Take Our Daughters to Work" Day. 120 Wall Street, 33rd Floor, New York 10005. Fax (212) 742-1653. E-mail <todtwcom@ms.foundation.org>. www.ms.foundation.org.

Materials Available Through Peace Corps' Information Collection and Exchange (ICE)

The following resources, though not specifically materials for girls' education, promote participatory practices and inclusion of both females and males. In addition, many of these resources can be used to enhance linkages between schools and communities using a community content-based instruction approach.

Choices: A Teen Woman's Journal for Self-Awareness and Personal Planning. Mindy Bingham, Kathleen Peters (Editor), Barbara Green (Editor), Advocacy Press, 1983. (ICE WD135)

Choices provides stories, activities and suggestions on what it is like to be a girl and what expectations, values and life options are determined by society and culture and, therefore, can be changed. This book provides a variety of exercises and activities for girls to do alone or in groups to better understand themselves, their aspirations and their potential. This book has been the basis of many Peace Corps activities such as camp GLOW.

Women Working Together for Personal, Economic, and Community Development: A Handbook of Activities for Women's Learning and Action Groups. Suzanne Kindervatter. UNIFEM/Peace Corps. 1993. (ICE WD003)

A handbook of activities for the development worker for women's learning and action groups. Offers guidelines on how to structure a program that will help women identify needs and problems, organize effectively, acquire marketable skills, and solve problems. Also available in Spanish (ICE WD021) and in French (ICE WD079*).

* Indicates title will be distributed only until current supply ends.

Nonformal Education Manual. Helen Fox. Peace Corps ICE. 1989. (ICE M0042)

Demonstrates how the techniques of nonformal education can be used by virtually all Peace Corps Volunteers. Emphasizes full-scale community participation at all stages of development. Also available in French (ICE M0048) and in Braille (request specifically from ICE).

How to Make Meetings Work: The New Interaction Method. Michael Doyle and David Straus. The Berkeley Publishing Group. 1976. (ICE CD021)

A how-to book that presents a way to minimize wasted time and set priorities for meetings. This interaction method describes how to develop an agenda and facilitate meetings to reach a more effective outcome. Most examples can be adapted for use in rural settings.

Just Stir Gently: The Way to Mix Hygiene Education with Water Supply and Sanitation. Marieke T. Boot. IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, The Netherlands. 1991. (ICE WS113)

Promotes hygiene education by relaying information on conditions and practices that help to prevent water-bourne and sanitation-related diseases. Directed towards integrating hygiene education with aspects of water supply and sanitation projects.

Rapid and Participatory Rural Appraisal Notes, No. 21 – Special Issue on Participatory Tools and Methods in Urban Areas. Sustainable Agriculture Programme. IIED. 1994. (ICE WS119)

Describes practitioners' experiences using participatory methodology in the urban context. Provides urban-based projects with a framework for participatory project work. Brings Volunteers up to date on development methodology in the urban environment.

Another Point of View: A Manual on Gender Analysis Training for Grassroots Workers (Training Manual). A. Rani Parker. UNIFEM. 1993. (ICE WD108)

Workshop and training manual focusing on gender issues in development. Specifically relevant to the experience of community-based development workers. Helpful in the design and implementation of gender-sensitive development programs at the grassroots level.

Gender and Development Training/ Girls' Education Manual. Peace Corps. 1998. (ICE M0054)

Product of the Gender and Development Training Initiative, which seeks to institutionalize the consideration of gender issues throughout Peace Corps. Contains eight booklets on gender and development training, which provide background and development of project; training designs for various participants; session plans and handouts; and insights from the field. Contains four booklets on Girls' Education, including programming, training, and activities.

Navamaga: Training Activities for Group Building, Health and Income Generation. Dian Svendsen and Sujatha Wijetillek. UNIFEM/Peace Corps. 1983. (ICE WD006)

Handbook created by Sri Lankan rural development workers for grassroots development workers. It can be used as a tool to help villagers identify health and nutrition problems, increase their leadership skills and decision-making capabilities, and plan and implement small-scale projects to improve family nutrition and health and to increase family income. Available in Spanish (ICE WD071).

PACA: Participatory Analysis for Community Action. Peace Corps. 1996. (ICE M0053)

Provides participatory methodology and techniques for working with communities. Includes tools that promote the inclusion of representative voices in a community in Peace

Corps project planning and implementation. PACA is a step in institutionalizing the inclusion of women in all Peace Corps project development, monitoring, and implementation.

Tools of Gender Analysis: A Guide to Field Methods for Bringing Gender into Sustainable Resource Management. Barbara Thomas-Slayter, Andrea Lee Esser and M. Dale Shields. Clark University. 1993. (ICE WD112)

In a clear and concise manner, presents methods for gathering data and examining men's and women's roles in natural resource management. Information illustrated with brief examples of projects in different developing countries. Useful material for Pre-Service Training of Volunteers.

Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship. Roger A. Hart. UNICEF International Child Development Centre. 1992. (ICE YD006)

Describes as a ladder the different levels at which children have participated in decision-making, from simply making an appearance to actually initiating projects and sharing responsibilities with adults. Describes the British experience of children's participation through the schools in community research and development, and children in developing countries taking charge of their lives.

Choose a Future: Issues and Options for Adolescent Girls. CEDPA Publications. 1996. (ICE WD127)

Program guide for facilitators and trainers working with girls ages 12–20. Brings together ideas and activities to help adolescent girls learn about and deal with issues they face, including self-esteem problems, reproductive issues, decision-making skills, community involvement, and many more.

Leadership Development: A Handbook from YouthBuild USA and the Youth Action Program. Dorothy Stoneman and John Bell, YouthBuild USA. 1993. (ICE YD008)

A handbook based on ten years of experience building the Youth Action Program (YAP) of the East Harlem Block Schools. Contains background information on the accomplishments of the YAP program and is organized around the seven essential elements of leadership development: 1) counteracting the effects of oppression; 2) nurturing personal development; 3) teaching leadership skills; 4) providing the experience of success; 5) educating about the world; 6) resolving personal hang-ups and correcting academic deficiencies; and 7) organizing to have impact on the world.

Life Planning Education. The Center for Population Options. 1995. (ICE YD004)

Comprehensive manual to prepare teenagers for the world of work and parenthood. Available in Spanish (ICE YD007).

Peace Corps' Rededication to Youth: Addressing the Needs of Youth-at-Risk. Peace Corps. 1992. (ICE M0043)

Introduces Peace Corps' emphasis on youth development with an overview of the problems faced by youth in the developing world. Provides examples of how Volunteers can help youth who may be facing such problems as homelessness, AIDS, unemployment, unwanted pregnancies, and lack of positive opportunities.

For Posts that wish to order non-Peace Corps publications, fax or cable to:

Overseas Support Specialist for Region
and send fiscal coding for purchase.

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Habitat for Humanity International

Mailing Address:

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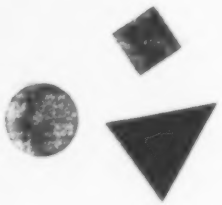

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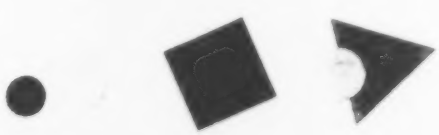

Got a Good Idea?

Send us your "idea" suggestions for *The Idea Book*.

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Here's my idea(s) that might be useful in future idea books.

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If necessary, attach additional sheets to complete description.
Include any samples or photos that help illustrate your project ideas.

Send to:

Peace Corps • Information Collection and Exchange
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Telephone: (202) 692-2640 • Fax: (202) 692-2641